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Letter dated 17 July 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I wish to draw your attention to the latest incident in the ongoing Palestinian campaign of terrorism directed against the citizens of Israel.

Shortly after 3 p.m. (local time) today, Palestinian terrorists detonated a roadside bomb as an Israeli passenger bus was passing by on its way to the community of Emanuel. After immobilizing the bus, the terrorists, who had been hiding by the side of the road and were wearing Israeli army uniforms, sprayed the bus with gunfire and hurled anti-tank grenades through its windows as passengers trapped inside scrambled for cover. Eight Israelis were killed in the attack and 16 were wounded, half of them seriously. Among the dead was Tiferet Sarah Shilon, a 9-month-old baby girl, killed along with her 67-year-old grandmother, and her 35-year-old father. Also killed was a baby who had been delivered by emergency Caesarean section after her mother, in the late stages of pregnancy, was injured in the attack.

At least four Palestinian terrorist organizations claimed responsibility for the attack: Hamas; the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Islamic Jihad; and the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigades, the terrorist wing of Chairman Arafat's own Fatah faction. It is believed that the attack was carried out by the same Hamas cell that carried out a similar attack in the same spot on 12 December 2001, an attack that was referred to in a letter dated 13 December 2001 (A/56/706-S/2001/1198).

Israel holds the Palestinian Authority and its Chairman, Yasser Arafat, responsible for this latest act of terrorism. Such attacks are the inevitable result of the constant incitement to violence in the official Palestinian media, the demonization of Jews and Israelis in Palestinian schools and the financial and logistical support provided to known terrorists by Palestinian Authority officials.

Yesterday's attack confirms the continuing need for Israeli defensive measures in the face of unrelenting threats of Palestinian terrorism. Although it is impossible to thwart every attempted action, countless terror attacks have been prevented in recent weeks by the ongoing efforts of Israeli forces. So long as the Palestinian Authority refuses to fulfil its responsibility to fight terrorism, in accordance with its

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signed obligations and the resolutions of the Security Council, Israel will be left with no choice but to take the actions it deems necessary in exercise of its right to self-defense.

I submit this letter in follow-up to my numerous letters detailing the campaign of Palestinian terrorism that began in September 2000.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 166, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative